

# CENTERVIEWS

Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment | Brooks City-Base, Texas

Summer 2007 | Vol. 13, No. 2

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS:

REPAIRING THE  
RAVAGES OF  
FATHER TIME AND  
MOTHER NATURE





New outfall pumps after installation at the London Avenue canal in New Orleans. AFCEE partnered with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to install outfall canal pumps at two locations. The pumps transfer water from areas prone to flooding into Lake Pontchartrain. (Courtesy photo)



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Suggestions and criticisms are also welcome.

## Editor's Note:

The CenterViews staff is sad to announce the passing of Lisa Carlson, a former AFCEE employee, on Aug. 8.

We met Ms. Carlson in 1997 when she was working as a natural resource conservation specialist in what was then the Environmental Conservation and Planning Directorate. We ran an article at the time about an important study she was managing to protect an endangered subspecies of the Arizona pronghorn antelope.

Ms. Carlson left AFCEE in 1999 to return to her home state of California.

She is survived by her son Stefan Carlson who is serving in the U. S. Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton.

Ms. Carlson's family and friends have requested that persons wishing to honor her memory make a donation to the American Cancer Society or other cancer research or treatment center of their choice.

On a much lighter note, Martha "Marti" Ribeiro (pictured below), a contractor whose articles appeared in this publication, left AFCEE for a job



Martha "Marti" Ribeiro poses with a boy in Afghanistan when she was stationed there while on active duty with the Air Force.

with a public relations firm in another state. In the short time she was here she did an excellent job in reporting on the Center's worldwide mission, particularly the work taking place in Iraq.

Marti's contributions will be missed, and we wish her well in her new career. Fortunately for us, she had some articles in the works and those will appear in future issues.



# Summer 2007

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## Two winning teams

This column is not about sports, but in a way it is. Unless you've been living on Mars for the past few months you probably know that the San Antonio Spurs are the 2007 NBA champions. This is their fourth national title in the past eight years. We're proud of our team and we will enthusiastically support them on their "drive for five" next season in true AFCEE tradition.

You've probably heard, also, the many analyses about what makes the team so great. It's been suggested – and I believe this – that the Spurs are successful because they consistently bring in new players who share the team's values and work ethic.

The players know that they are not all superstars, that not one of them alone makes the team great. Rather, each member knows his strengths and role in the organization and then works hard to achieve a common goal. In short, the Spurs are successful because they really are a team.

It doesn't hurt, of course, that Coach Gregg Popovich is a United States Air Force Academy graduate.

Now I want to move on to another great team. It's called the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment.

I think the AFCEE-Spurs analogy works, as it does for other organizations, for a number of reasons.

First, the people who come here tend to share AFCEE's views, values and culture, and we've been very fortunate to keep finding folks like these.

Secondly, when new members find their place on the team they work very hard at their position, whether it be in a leadership role or as a day-to-day project manager, contracting officer, financial person or public affairs specialist.

Finally, everybody in this building is working toward a common goal, and that's to be the best in what we do. That's why we have been so successful.

A team is all about people. In all the discussion about transformation, transition and reorganization we need to focus on what is the most important, and that's the folks who work here. We need to be sensitive about their concerns and help them weather the changes taking place locally and in the Air Force in general.

For our new people, we need to help "grow" them, as veteran players might help a rookie member of a ball club. They have to learn the playbook, what the



AFCEE Director Paul Parker

coach is like and what is expected of them. This is true in any organization.

For those persons who have retired or moved on to other endeavors, we continue to show respect and appreciation for their years of service by making sure they go out in style, with the proper ceremony and recognition of their service to the team.

As I mentioned before, we're lucky to continue finding the right persons to come to AFCEE. The AFCEE workforce is constantly changing. Seasoned, experienced people leave and not so seasoned take their place. Over the past year and in the coming year, a lot of new people have joined our team and there are still more to come.

This is very important because we have an aging workforce. There have been a lot of retirements over the past two years and more will follow for sure.

The positive side to an aging workforce is that people who've been at AFCEE and in the Air Force for so long time are here because it's where they want to be. Each year we hire about 50 brand-new civilian interns in the Civil Engineer Program, and yet our attrition rate typically runs less than for private industry. Why is that?

I think we do better because in an age when employee and employer loyalty are not what they used to be, young people who come to work for the government sector are probably finding a culture with values, beliefs and goals that they can blend into comfortably. It may be that they see an opportunity to do meaningful work that has a significant impact on their lives and the lives of their fellow Americans.

We always want to bring in talented players and team members, and they'll want to come here because everybody wants to join a winning team. And as long as we value our members as individuals while not losing sight of our common goals, I think we'll continue to be successful – even if we don't get to wear championship rings. □

# New pumps protect New Orleans

By Marti D. Ribeiro

AFCEE and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working in a joint venture to install outfall canal pumps at two locations in the city of New Orleans.

Weston Solutions was contracted to build the outfall pumps. They will transfer water from flood-prone areas into Lake Pontchartrain. During hurricane season the pumps will prevent the devastating floods that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"During Hurricane Katrina, Lake Pontchartrain overflowed and water was pushed back into the city," said Capt. Eric Dawson, AFCEE project manager. "The Army Corps of Engineers built flood gates at the entrance of the outflow canal to stop the water from flowing back into the city and AFCEE is installing the pumps to transfer the water over the flood gate, if needed."

Phase I of this project involved the Corps of Engineers installing the flood gates and initial pumps at the end of the canals.

During Phase II, AFCEE will install more pumps for two of the four canals that drain into Lake Pontchartrain. The pumps will have the capability to evacuate water at a rate of 7,300 cubic feet per second, the equivalent of filling an Olympic-sized swimming pool in less than five seconds, according to Corps officials.

This was a "quick turn" project, according to Captain Dawson. The Corps needed these projects to be completed by the height of the hurricane season, in late summer 2007. So, they reached out to AFCEE to use their contracting tools to make it happen.

"(AFCEE) was able to use our high-capacity contracting capabilities to reach out and make quick contact with contractors to get this vital project awarded and started," he said.

While AFCEE helped procure the contract, the Corps is managing the projects.

"It's great that we could partner together to accomplish something good for the city of New Orleans," said Suzanne Bilbrey, Installations and MAJCOM Support Worldwide director at AFCEE.

According to officials at the New Orleans Hurricane Protection office, with the new structure in place, the city has better protection than ever before. When storm surge threatens

the safe water level in the canal, the gates will close to lock the surge and pumps will evacuate the water through the structure into Lake Pontchartrain.

The pumps are just a small part of the overall Corps projects to upgrade the flood and storm protection system in New Orleans, expected to be finished by 2010. □



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maneuvers an 80,000-pound pump into place at the London Avenue Canal pump station in New Orleans. AFCEE has partnered with the Corps to install outfall canal pumps at two locations. The pumps transfer water from flooded areas into Lake Pontchartrain. These devices protect the city from flooding during hurricane season, preventing devastating events such as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. (U.S. Army photo by Andy Winslow)

# Quick repairs keeps *Okinawa pier safe*

By Christopher Hobbins and Tomoe Luke

**R**epairs to a U.S. Army pier damaged by a typhoon last year in Okinawa Island, Japan, were completed just a few days before another storm hit the island.

White Beach is a U.S. Army and Navy co-operated facility located on the eastern coastline of Okinawa. The climate is tropical and throughout the summer months the island is constantly threatened by typhoons. Although the island is surrounded by beautiful coral reefs, strong waves still batter the piers during the tempests.

In the summer of 2006 the Army pier operated by the 505th Quartermaster Battalion was damaged by an unusually large storm. The concrete structures known as “tetra pods” and armor rocks (protective boulders) that shielded the pier were completely removed by the force of the storm, exposing the concrete panels that made up the pier wall. The surge of the waves also undermined the panels, washing out the backfill materials behind the wall and causing underwater sinkholes as well as on the top of the pier.

The Army ordered emergency repair of the pier structure, requesting that the work be completed before the start of the next typhoon season – summer 2007.

Funded by the Defense Energy Support Center, AFCEE contractor CH2M HILL quickly responded, mobilizing the equipment and personnel for underwater damage assessment. With repair designs developed immediately, the work started in March.

Repairs included installing steel sheet piles along a 150-foot section of the damaged pier wall, replacing armor rocks and tetra pod posts and filling both the underwater and pier surface sinkholes.

Completed on July 12, the construction beat the schedule, with final inspection scheduled for a few days later. Then on July 13 – Friday, the 13th – a category 4 (on a five-point scale) typhoon – a storm the same size as Hurricane Katrina – hit Okinawa. It was the largest typhoon to hit the island in the month of July in the past 50 years.

Although the storm damaged the asphalt pavement and some of the armor rocks were washed away, the pier itself withstood the large-scale typhoon and suffered no structural damage.

Workers drive a steel sheet pile 20 feet below the sea floor to prevent the U.S. Army pier on Okinawa Island, Japan, from moving during typhoons.



A contractor employee measures a sinkhole on a U.S. Army pier caused by typhoon that hit Okinawa Island, Japan, last year. The pier had to undergo emergency repairs in time for the new typhoon season.

Armor rocks and concrete structures called tetra pods scattered during a typhoon are relocated around the U.S. Army pier damaged during the storm that struck Okinawa Island, Japan, in 2006.



(Air Force photos by James Caldwell)

The quick turnaround of the project’s funding, planning and execution by AFCEE, CH2M HILL and the DESC team saved the pier from the unusually early-season typhoon and avoided structural damage to the pier. Without the emergency work, the government could have been faced with spending millions of dollars on repairs to the structure.

*Christopher Hobbins was the Okinawa pier project manager for AFCEE and Tomoe Luke for CH2M HILL. □*



# FIGHTER AIRCRAFT have new place to land at Andersen

By Marti D. Ribeiro

Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, now has a new place for aircraft to land.

AFCEE contracted with the firm AMEC to demolish 12,600 feet of runway and completely replace it with new materials, as well as install a new aircraft arresting system, the Barrier Aircraft Kit 12, otherwise known as the BAK-12.

The \$35 million project, which greatly improves the mission capability in the Pacific Theater, was awarded in October 2004 and completed in June.

The original runway, built in 1945, was in need of major repairs and upgrades to current runway specifications.

The old runway was made from asphaltic concrete, said Maj. Elwood Henry, deputy, Pacific Division at AFCEE. "We replaced the previous runway with all concrete to meet current specifications," he explained.

Constructing the new runway completely out of concrete will make it last longer and easier to maintain, according to Bill Moritz, onsite AFCEE project manager.

"The old runway had to be re-sealed every five to 10 years, the new runway should last for 20-30 years," he said.

But building a runway isn't as simple as pouring new cement slabs.

Contractors had the unique challenge of using large slip-form pavers to lay the cement in large patches evenly across the new runway. A slip-form paver is a machine specifically

designed to receive and pave cement, according to engineering specifications, in a continuous manner.

"The majority of the skilled laborers for this type of work on Guam were accustomed to laying cement for sidewalks and driveways, not large pieces of runway," Major Henry said.

"Slip-form paving has not been attempted on Guam prior to this project," said Francisco Cruz, Booz Allen-Hamilton associate contracted through AFCEE to assist the base with project management.

The contractor overcame this challenge by providing on-the-job training for those at the jobsite and also required work to be re-accomplished as needed.

Once the sub-contractors were trained and the initial concrete was poured, AFCEE stepped into yet another challenge. On top of the regular concrete, contractors also had to groove the slabs.

"Quarter-inch grooves were cut into the concrete all across the runway," Major Henry said. "This increases the

John McCown, far left, AFCEE project manager, oversees contractor workers paving a maintenance road leading to the Barrier Aircraft Kit 12 on the newly refurbished runway on Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. The BAK 12 is an aircraft arresting that helps stop aircraft in case of an emergency, such as brake malfunction.





Employees with AFCEE contractor AMEC install the new Barrier Aircraft Kit 12 on the recently refurbished runway at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. The BAK 12 aircraft arresting system helps aircraft stop in case of an emergency.

friction when aircraft land, so they can stop more efficiently.”

The grooving is an essential part to any fighter aircraft runway, he said.

The grooving was completed, but a final safety requirement was needed to finish the project. As is standard for all bases with fighter aircraft, the Andersen runway has an aircraft arresting system which gives the aircraft the ability to stop in case of an emergency or brake malfunction.

The original plan was to use the existing BAK-12, but with the change in concrete grades, the previous system was no longer serviceable.

“We installed a new one which also corrected prior deficiencies at the same time,” Major Henry said.

The concrete, grooving and BAK-12 are finished, and after additional runway marking and light installation by the 36th Civil Engineer Squadron, the runway will be open for business.

“The completion of the runway gives us an exponential increase in the efficiency of the airfield,” said Senior Master Sgt. Darron Williams, 36th Operations Support Squadron airfield manager. “With one runway, we were sometimes limited in our operations. With the second opening up, anything is possible.” □

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“Slip-form paving has not been attempted on Guam prior to this project.”

Francisco Cruz  
Booz Allen-Hamilton associate

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# Good 'bugs' help clean up contamination at Hickam

By Marti D. Ribeiro

A lot of people scream and run at the sight or thought of a bug. But unbeknownst to those of us bug haters there are millions of microscopic bugs all around us. Some of these seemingly invisible bugs have the amazing ability to metabolically breakdown toxic contaminants such as Trichloroethylene, or TCE, into non-harmful organic compounds.

AFCEE contracted with Shaw Environmental to use this enhanced bioremediation technology to clean up TCE in groundwater at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

This technology, called bioaugmentation, is the process of introducing microbial strains to a contaminated environment and feeding the microbes, or "bugs", a carbon food source such as sodium lactate to stimulate them into consuming the contaminants. If successful, the resulting contaminant breakdown byproducts are non-toxic compounds, meaning the chemical risk is eliminated.

"What's unique at Hickam is that we're using bugs indigenous to Hawaii," said Bob Chang, AFCEE project manager.

Many times patented or "designer" microbes specially prepared or engineered in the laboratory are used. These

microbial cultures are then grown in large quantities in the laboratory before being introduced into the contaminated environment, usually through injection wells.

According to Mr. Chang, the drawback to this approach is the challenge of overcoming the indigenous population of microbes present at the site and the typical lag phase in growth usually associated with the introduction of a new species into a foreign environment.

At Hickam, however, this challenge was avoided by using microbes already present there. Shaw scientists and engineers were able to increase the bug populations significantly before reintroducing them to their native environment. Since each microbe serves as a single chemical reactor, the purpose was to increase the overall number of microbes.

"This approach also eliminates the introducing of foreign microbes into an environment," said Jim Gonzales, AFCEE Environmental Restoration Division chief. "In this case, when the microbes finish their mission the sodium lactate is stopped and the microbe population will die down to its original level."

The contaminated soil at Hickam contains chlorinated

organics left over from a former municipal landfill. Mamala Bay Golf Course on Hickam now rests on top of the site.

While it's not known how long it will take to clean up the contamination using this technique, the end result is a clean environment for Hickam residents. □

An employee with AFCEE contractor Shaw Environmental feeds sodium lactate to microscopic "bugs" indigenous to Hawaii during a process called bioaugmentation at Hickam Air Force Base. (Courtesy photo)



## 'CSI' AFCEE:

# Environmental forensics help answer contamination questions

A "suspect" is alleged to be the source of soil and groundwater contamination although a nearby petroleum refinery looks very suspicious indeed.

The "accused" calls in the chemists with AFCEE's Environmental Restoration Division for help. They get to work right away, taking "fingerprints" from soil, water and other source material in search of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

PAHs are chemicals formed during the incomplete burning of coal, oil, gas and other organic substances.

Following a detailed forensics investigation, the evidence is conclusive and the accused is exonerated of the charges. The investigators' focus then shifts to the next likely suspect, the petroleum refinery. The scientists collect fuel samples there, analyze them and this time come up with a not-so-favorable conclusion: The refinery did it.

Another investigation successfully completed.

Although this real-world case might not have the glamour or hype of something like the television show "CSI," where crime-scene investigators try to figure out who did what to whom, when and how, the new discipline of environmental forensics uses similar scientific methods to make determinations about contamination.

AFCEE's "CSI team" consists of Dr. Javier Santillan, Dr. William Batschelet and Ed Brown – all chemists with the Technical Directorate's Environmental Restoration Division.

Environmental forensics has developed as a result of recent advances in analytical chemistry and other scientific disciplines as well as increased rigor in quality control procedures, said Mr. Brown.

This new field, he said, "is rapidly evolving into a powerful, advanced site-characterization methodology that helps decision makers develop a better understanding of the origin and timing of a contaminant's release into the environment."

In the refinery caper, for example, the chemists used "chemical fingerprinting" which has proven to be a very effective tool in investigations that involve crude, residual and fuel oils. This process, Mr. Brown explained, can determine the biological material from which the petroleum was originally made. "Our chemists have used this method to rule out Air Force activities as being a source of contamination on a couple of occasions," he said.



AFCEE's "CSI team" consists of, from left, Ed Brown, Dr. William Batschelet and Dr. Javier Santillan. The team of chemists is assigned to the Technical Directorate's Environmental Restoration Division. (File photo by Gil Dominguez)

In another instance, there was the question of whether contamination concentration decreases at a site that had been undergoing remediation for some time were due to the engineered solution or natural processes. Using state-of-the-art investigative tools, including the newly developed AFCEE Rapid Site Characterization approach, the chemists gathered scientific data showing that it was natural attenuation that was cleaning up the site, and at even faster rates than previously estimated.

In less than a month the information was compiled, reviewed and handed over to the decision makers – a process that in the past could have taken investigators up to three years to complete. The results of the analysis convinced environmental regulators that no further action was needed at the site.

Investigations, of course, don't always turn out in the Air Force's favor. Dr. Batschelet relates that in one case in which he was involved, the results determined that the Air Force was indeed the culprit. In that situation, he said, "we did the right thing. We immediately took ownership of the problem and actively worked with the community to determine the extent and impact of the contamination and began remedial actions."

In addition to quantitative fingerprinting techniques, other investigative chemical methods include isotope analysis and chemical degradation models.

These analytical tools help environmental forensics chemists determine “who dun it”: Who or what caused the contamination and when. These are important facts used in determining cost of recovery actions and the potentially responsible parties who must pay for cleanup costs and liability claims.

The need for analytical methods that determine qualitatively and quantitatively organic compounds in the

environment was recognized in the early 1950s, and these tools have been gradually developing over the decades.

Also, over the past 30 years site characterization timeframes and costs have increased by as much as 45 percent, according to some industry estimates. As a result, the impetus has been to develop quicker investigation and characterization techniques that will reduce time and costs.

Environmental forensics helps meet that demand. □

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## Environmental restoration workshop focus: better and faster cleanup

By Gil Dominguez

The 2007 United States Air Force Environmental Restoration Workshop took place in San Antonio in June.

Held downtown at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel, the theme of this year’s gathering was “Optimizing Restoration.”

More than 200 participants registered for the meeting compared to the 160 that attended the last workshop three years ago, said Air Staff environmental restoration chief Lt. Col. Mark Vivians in his opening remarks. He added that the increase in attendance showed the “level of commitment to the workshop.”

The colonel observed, also, that the Air Force’s restoration program “has come a long way since its inception.”

In the beginning, the Air Force as well all of the other military services looked at restoration as being at odds with operational readiness. Now it has become a way of life in the Department of Defense.

As Colonel Vivians pointed out, “all commanders are leaning forward” in support of restoration. “We’re optimizing the program and want to see it work successfully.”

DOD spends billions of dollars in characterizing and assessing contaminated sites. More funds are then spent to construct, operate, maintain and monitor the remediation systems that are in place.

Optimization is the process that seeks to lower remediation costs while maintaining efficiency, using a systematic way to review and revise cleanup goals, if necessary.

The keynote presentation was made by Maj. Gen. Del Eulberg, the Air Force Civil Engineer, who spoke on Air Force transformation. Stating that “change is inevitable,” he acknowledged that “folks are always a little concerned about change. It always causes stress in the workforce.”

He added, however, that change is “nothing new. It’s something we’re used to. The only difference now is the unprecedented pace of change.”

The Air Force, the general said, has always set out on its own path and embraced technology. It is this “core competency” that has set it apart from the other military branches, he said.

The Air Force Civil Engineer touched also on the centralization of Air Force environmental restoration at AFCEE, which he said will improve the program, making it more efficient and accelerate the cleanup process.

In many cases, he added, bases have “the same plume but different ways of dealing with it.” Centralization, however, will bring about a standardization of technical solutions, acquisition strategies, execution and oversight, the general said.

Once the bases identify their requirements, it will be up to AFCEE to validate those and determine the best cleanup method for attacking the problems, said General Eulberg.

The AFCEE Technical Directorate staff – the people with the Ph.D.s and “fifty-pound” brains, as General Eulberg described them – will play a large role in that determination, and their talents will be leveraged with contractor support, he said.

In addition, the role of program managers will be redefined. Technical experts tend to lose their expertise – their niche – when they become “task order” managers in a “flow-through” contract process. Program managers, the general said, must “stop reading stuff that five other people read before you.”

At AFCEE, program managers will have more authority to make decisions about remediation requirements. “That’s what we’ll do at AFCEE,” said General Eulberg. “We will need more people here (to do that). But regardless of where you are, we need you. Failure is not an option.”

Another benefit of centralizing the restoration program at AFCEE, General Eulberg noted, is that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command now need to go to only one agency when doing business with the Air Force. □



## 'Partners in Privatization' workshop theme

The 2007 Air Force Housing Privatization Workshop will be held in San Antonio, Nov. 6-8 at the Omni Hotel. The theme for this year's workshop is "Partners in Privatization," with discussion centered on portfolio management, asset management and execution.

These are the topics and activities planned for the workshop:

- Portfolio management sessions covering construction oversight and surveillance; restructuring and refinancing; and project decisions and impacts.
- Asset management sessions dealing with strategic communications and asset management groundwork and a panel discussion on the "top three issues."
- A separate execution training track concentrating on project execution from concept development to closing will be provided for bases new to privatization.

Invited workshop speakers are Kathleen Ferguson, deputy Air Force Civil Engineer, and Henry Cisneros, executive chairman of CityView, a San Antonio-based real estate and development company, and former secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In October Ms. Ferguson will move to her new assignment as deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations at Air Force Headquarters in Washington.

Workshop officials said the Air Force organizes events like this one to meet the dynamic needs of the evolving housing privatization program.

Information about the workshop, including agenda, presentations, lodging and registration will be available on the Air Force Housing Privatization Events Website (<http://www.afcee.brooks.af.mil/dc/dcp/news/default.asp>) beginning Sept. 7.

In the interim, information is available by calling (210) 352-3211 or e-mail at [air.force.hp.events@gmail.com](mailto:air.force.hp.events@gmail.com). □

## AFCEE GIVEN HOUSING PRIVATIZATION AUTHORITY

The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations (SAF/IEI) has officially delegated to AFCEE authority over the majority of decisions regarding housing privatization oversight and management.

Housing officials said the Center now has more authority in this area, including the ability to further delegate responsibilities to installation commanders.

They said AFCEE retains project oversight and management authority over all existing and future projects in the Air Force's Military Housing Privatization Initiative portfolio while the role of commanders is the day-to-day administration of housing projects on their bases.

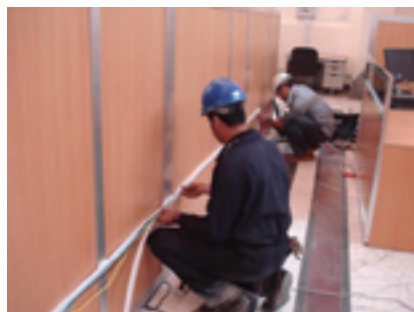
AFCEE's new role was spelled out in a "Delegation of Authority" letter signed by SAF/IEI last October. On June 8, Center director Paul Parker signed delegation of authority letters to installation commanders of closed housing projects.

Officials point out, however, that these letters have "no effect on any authority an installation commander has" in such areas as "fulfillment of the installation mission, installation security, the health and safety of persons residing or working on the installation or control over military members under his/her command."

The delegation of authority to AFCEE and the centralization of housing privatization at the Center is part of the Air Staff's Lean Initiative, a business model that emphasizes eliminating non-value added activities while delivering quality products faster, at least cost and with greater efficiency.

Accomplishing Air Staff's housing privatization Lean Initiative will help the Air Force continue to ensure the objective of the Air Force MHPI is achieved, which is to provide quality housing for Air Force service members and their families, AFCEE housing officials said. □

## Buildings for counterterrorism agencies get makeover



Electrical work is completed on the ground floor of the Believers Palace in Iraq's International Zone, formerly the Green Zone. Part of the facility, which once belonged to Saddam Hussein, has been converted into the Iraqi Counterterrorism Center.

AFCEE contractor TolTest, Inc., has completed work on facilities that will house two new counterterrorism organizations in Iraq's International Zone, formerly called the "Green Zone."

A section of the Believers Palace, once belonging to Saddam Hussein, has been converted into the Iraqi Counterterrorism Center and a former compound is now the Iraqi Counterterrorism Bureau.

The Believers Palace, a multimillion dollar, dome-topped bunker complex originally built by a German company in the 1980s, is a massive structure that served to protect the Iraqi dictator and his entourage.

Its features include a filtration system to ward off a gas attack, electrical generators and secret passageways and escape routes.

American air strikes at the beginning of the hostilities blasted the palace roof but did little or no damage to the underground bunkers.

Construction at the facilities included renovating electrical, sanitary, and mechanical systems; installing new plumbing and HVAC systems; and replacing anything that was damaged or worn out.

At the customer's request, renovations were made also to the guard tower and main buildings at the site.

Total cost of the project was more than \$4.2 million.

Army Brig. Gen. Mark Phelan, commander of the Iraq National Counter Terror Force Transition Team, praised the contractor in a letter of appreciation.

"The supervision and leadership of the TolTest team has risen well above all expectations," he wrote. "The team has continuously put forth tremendous efforts of demanding and meticulous detail while developing the facilities for this important Iraqi command." □

## Wells to provide water to Iraq border forts

By Marti D. Ribeiro

Forty-three new wells being installed by an AFCEE contractor will supply water to Iraqi border forts throughout Al Anbar province.

The project, which began in the spring of 2006, consists of installing the wells, electrical connections and water treatment system.

The water wells are scheduled to be completed in November.

"These wells will provide much-needed potable water to the personnel providing security at the Iraqi border forts," said Craig Mayo, AFCEE project manager.

Hiring Iraqi subcontractors and skilled labor at each site, these wells will each provide 5,000 gallons of drinking water every day.

Officials with AFCEE contractor TolTest said workers have encountered several scheduling delays due to difficult drilling conditions.

"There are several areas in which layers of marble are present, which have dramatically slowed down the drilling process," Mr. Mayo said.

Along with drilling problems, the contractor has encountered mechanical problems and delays due to weather conditions.

But, the challenges don't stop there. According to TolTest reports, several incidents involving insurgents have occurred.

In this case, however, the results have outweighed the obstacles.

"It's important that we help the Iraqi people set up their infrastructure, to include providing potable water," Mr. Mayo said. "We're empowering the people of Iraq to provide a highly-needed resource to the personnel defending their country." □



Iraqi workers build the wells that will supply water to Iraqi border forts.

## Regional office helps set up military base tour



A participant in a recent tour of military installations in the Puget Sound area gets an inside look at the combat vehicle Stryker at Fort Lewis, Wash.

The AFCEE Western Regional Environmental Office helped organize a tour of three military installations in the state of Washington's Puget Sound area for legislators from a number of states as well local officials.

The WREO is the Region 10 Department of Defense Regional Environmental Coordinator.

The event, held April 26 and 27, involved visits to Naval Base Kitsap, Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base followed by a half-day workshop called "Strengthening Military and Community Partnerships."

About 30 guests made the tour. They included state legislators from Alaska, Idaho and Washington; legislative staffers; representatives from the Washington governor's office; a Texas military preparedness commissioner; and county and local government officials from areas near the bases.

REO officials said one of the event's goals was to show the representatives examples of encroachment around the installations, the result of either local development or military growth.

In keeping with this goal, discussions were held also on ways to secure easements that would prevent incompatible development or preserve open space and farmland around the bases.

Officials said the workshop's purpose was to "identify the unique opportunities the states and military installations have to work together to develop and implement policy that meets the challenges faced by both the installations and their respective communities."

Approximately 50 attendees took part in the workshop, which featured presentations on local land-use issues, school district challenges and success stories and lessons learned in addressing compatibility challenges.

Presenters offered suggestions on how legislators could work more effectively with the DOD installations in their states and be responsive to their needs.

William Ehrie, chairman of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission, gave a detailed presentation on the actions his state has taken to maintain the "quality relationship" Texas and the services enjoy.

Gary Brackett, representing the Tacoma and Pierce County, Wash., business community, pointed to the California Military Advisory Committee as a potential model for other states to emulate when tackling issues of land use compatibility and regional infrastructure requirements.

REO officials said the workshop "served as an excellent opportunity for interactive discussions" between military representatives, elected officials and experts in planning and natural resource protection.

Washington State Sen. Marilyn Rasmussen, as well as other tour and workshop attendees, said she was interested in participating in more events like these at other DOD locations throughout the nation. The senator endorsed, also, the concept of states establishing a standing committee or special commission to assure the military's training and readiness needs are satisfied.

The tour and workshop were part of DOD's Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative which strives to protect military test and training capabilities from encroachment. The program recommends engaging with partners to support compatible land uses.

For more information on this event, go to <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/envIRON/fedfacilities/FFMilMenu.htm> □



Capt. Reid Tanaka, Naval Base Kitsap, Wash., commanding officer, welcomes participants of a tour of three military installations in the Puget Sound area. AFCEE's Western Regional Environmental Office helped organize the excursion.



# LIVE from San Antonio, it's AFCEE !

By John Garza



Checking on a live Web broadcast are, from left, Rich Perry, John Garza and Ralph Miles. The three AFCEE staffers researched the available technology and set up a system that allowed employees at headquarters and regional offices to view live broadcasts on their computers. The first broadcast, an address by the AFCEE director (inset), was held in May

all of AFCEE's personnel, this is an extremely cost-effective method to make the video and audio viewable from basically anywhere on the existing AFCEE network.

The IP/TV technology makes for uniform and consistent delivery with a multitude of presentation options of briefings by AFCEE senior management. Management, for example, may decide to employ a live AFCEE-wide Web broadcast for timely issues or may choose to have a

briefing or event videotaped and available for viewing later by all personnel at their convenience, regardless of whether they are in their office, away on temporary duty or at some other location.

The IP/TV technology lends itself also to many other potential uses within AFCEE. It could be used for in-house technical training, live seminars, "how-to" courses and many other applications.

The technology is extremely easy to use. Personnel familiar with Microsoft's Internet Explorer will be quite comfortable with its operation. When accessing the system the user will typically choose between a live Web cast or pre-recorded events, seminars, etc.

What makes the technology so attractive is that users still have full use and control of their PC while viewing the presentation. They can continue to work or review documents, all while viewing (or, if desired, just listening) to the presentation. If the presentation is a pre-recorded video, the user can halt or fast-forward it just as if it were a DVD. □

*John Garza is a Computer Systems Division systems senior engineer with AFCEE contractor Vista International Ops. He assisted AFCEE in setting up the technology for the Center's first live broadcast over the Internet.*

May 9 marked the inaugural deployment of AFCEE's Live Web Broadcast Technology. AFCEE director Paul Parker's "stairwell call" was broadcast via the Internet simultaneously to all Center personnel at locations at Brooks City-Base, San Francisco, Atlanta, Dallas and the Massachusetts Military Reservation.

AFCEE officials asked the Computer Systems Division to find a Web-based/Internet-based technology that would allow users to watch live, interactive video from the convenience of their personal computers with no additional hardware requirements for each PC.

Ralph Miles of Computer Systems, contractor Vista International Ops and Richard Perry of the Public Affairs and Multimedia Division, researched various technologies that would meet AFCEE user requirements. In doing so, they found that Cisco Corp. had developed a network-based technology that would allow organizations with Enterprise Class Networks to leverage their investment of existing network technology with a system called Cisco IP/TV. This system captures video and audio, formats it in real time and then presents it over the Internet in a format compatible for viewing from within Internet Explorer.

Since the Computer Systems and Public Affairs and Multimedia divisions leveraged the existing financial and technological investments in a network that ties together

# Easy riders take to the road in **OKLAHOMA TOURNEY**

By Gil Dominguez



Bob Woodson on the road somewhere between Comanche and Apache, Okla. (Courtesy photo)



**W**hy would anyone take a weeklong, nearly 500-mile bicycle ride across Oklahoma near the beginning of summer, pedaling from 50 to 70 miles a day?

Ask the two AFCEE architects who instead of spending vacation time on a golf course or fishing by a quiet lake took part in the 29th annual FreeWheel, Oklahoma's premier bicycle touring event on June 10-16.

"You get a sense of accomplishment," said senior architect Dave Duncan, who along with colleague Bob Woodson made the 482-mile northward trek. "People don't believe me when I tell them it's relaxing. It's the most relaxing vacation you can have. There are no phones, no e-mail and the only concern is making it to the next stop on the tour."

There's also the camaraderie, as people of all ages, walks of life and different parts of the country come together to reach a common goal, said Mr. Duncan, himself an Oklahoma native.

"It's very doable by anyone in reasonable shape," he said about the tourney. "We think we're going to be oldest folks in the group but then we see people as old as 84 or 85 who complete every mile. And we've had kids as young as six."

Mr. Duncan's inspiration is "Hubie," an 81-year-old former German prisoner-of-war who immigrated to the United States after World War II and settled in Tulsa.

"He's been riding FreeWheel for some 22 years," said Mr. Duncan. "He's quite a character. He doesn't go very fast but he goes the whole distance."

Another inspirational figure was a disabled Vietnam veteran who rested his prosthesis on a simple foot peg on the right side and pedaled the bike all the way to the finish line with his good left leg.

This year's FreeWheel began in Comanche, Okla., near the Red River on the Texas border and ended in Coffeyville, Kan. The tourney follows a different route each year.

FreeWheel is not a race. Riders travel from 50 to 70 miles a day, stopping overnight in a series of host towns. They rise about five o'clock and are back on the road by about six.

"You get up in the morning, take down your tent, eat your breakfast, get on your bike and ride until you get to the campsite in the next town," said Mr. Woodson. "And then you do it all over again."

Cold-water showers are the norm, added Mr. Duncan. "We got used to cold showers so much we kind of looked forward to them," he said.

For Mr. Woodson, the bike trip was more of a personal challenge. After turning 60 in January – relatively young compared to the more senior riders – he said he wanted to see if he could still "accomplish these kinds of things."

"You're never too old to do it, I guess is what I thought," he said.

But as he admitted with a laugh, after two days of hard riding – particularly in the hot, humid weather – he was ready to come home. "I was looking for a way out," Mr. Woodson said, "thinking about how I could get to an airport and back to San Antonio."

He kept biking, though, and said he was glad he stayed in the tourney.

FreeWheel is a major event for small towns and communities along the way.

"The communities that are selected to be host towns love the opportunity for the route to pass through their towns," said Mr. Duncan.

The tour is both a celebration and a great economic boost for the small communities, some of which may have populations of only about 1,500, he said. It provides an opportunity for school and civic organizations to raise money by feeding and entertaining the 1,000 or more hungry and thirsty riders who take part in the event every year.

"You have barbecue lunches prepared by volunteer fire departments way out in the middle of nowhere," said Mr. Duncan. "You're presented with food the whole way."

Added Mr. Woodson: "They warned us not to expect to lose any weight on this ride, and that was true. I actually gained two pounds."

The host towns provide also overnight accommodations for the tired visitors, either in city parks, schools or campgrounds. The bicyclists' supplies, tents and other equipment ride ahead of them on an 18-wheeler.

This year's FreeWheel fell on the Sooner State's celebration of its 100 years of statehood. Called "Cycling the Centennial," the tourney gave small-town Oklahoma the opportunity to show off its civic pride and history. Riders were treated to food-fests and historical presentations in many of the towns where they camped.





Bob Woodson relaxes at a typical FreeWheelers' rest stop in Oklahoma. (Courtesy photo)

Mr. Duncan had made the ride four times before, but for the rookie Mr. Woodson the tourney was a revelation. Growing up in mountainous New Mexico, he had always thought that Oklahoma was fairly flat. "But it's not that way at all," he said. "On the eastern part of the state we got into some serious hills."

The two AFCEE employees prepared for the trek with weekend rides in the Hill Country north of San Antonio, usually going 28 to 50 miles a day.

Since FreeWheel is not a race, riders can travel at their own pace and even take all day long to reach their next stop if they want. Late arrivers, though, get the campsites nobody else wants, Mr. Duncan warned. But on the plus side, they don't have to help unload the baggage either.

The tourney was not uneventful for Mr. Woodson who suffered a spill that produced a gash in his right leg. It happened about 100 miles from the finish line, in a town named Hominy. As he explained it, he was following too close and tapped the rear wheel of Mr. Duncan's bicycle.

When Mr. Woodson fell, his leg hit his bike's chain ring.

"It cut about a two-inch chunk out of my leg," he related. "I had to go to the emergency room in Cleveland, Okla., to get some stitches."

But Mr. Woodson came back and finished the tour, as did a young girl who was thrown off her bike after being struck in the back by a drunk truck driver. The girl was rushed to the hospital and the next day was back on the ride despite being all bandaged up.

"Her backpack saved her," said Mr. Woodson. "The license plate caught the backpack and she was dragged under the truck for a short distance. She was bruised up pretty badly. When she was in the emergency room someone asked her if she needed anything, and she said, 'Yeah, I need a bicycle.'"

The girl was luckier than the inebriated driver. The riders had a police escort and the person riding with the young lady happened to be the Ponca City, Okla.,



police chief and a former sparring partner with former heavyweight champion George Foreman.

While Mr. Duncan and Mr. Woodson rode regular road bikes, there were all sorts of wheels on the road, including some tandems and triples. One young mother pulled a trailer carrying her children. Another bicyclist – a fireman – and his wife rode a \$7,000 fire-engine red tandem bike with flames painted on the sides.

Mr. Duncan, who is already getting prepared for the 2008 FreeWheel, said he wants to expand the AFCEE group.

He may have to do it without Mr. Woodson, though, who is undecided about the trek. He said he is looking at tourneys in other parts of the country, including his home state of New Mexico, and might take part in those, although he's not ready to commit himself.

Anyone interested in something other than golfing or fishing next year should contact Mr. Duncan for the 2008 FreeWheel. □



Bob Woodson, left, and Dave Duncan, pose at the FreeWheel finish line in Coffeyville, Kan. (Courtesy photo)

## Executive director retires



Col. Richard Bartholomew

Col. Richard Bartholomew, AFCEE executive director and military commander, retired from the Air Force in July.

A native of Memphis, Tenn., the colonel graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a degree in civil engineering in May 1981.

After receiving his Air Force commission he entered active duty at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss. Before coming to AFCEE, Colonel Bartholomew served in engineering posts in the United States, Europe and Asia. His first assignment here was as director of what was then the MAJCOM & Installation Support-Gold Directorate.

He was named AFCEE's executive director in August 2006.

Colonel Bartholomew and his family will stay in the San Antonio area. □

## Division chief ends military career



Lt. Col. Michael Prazak

Lt. Col. Michael Prazak, a division chief with the MAJCOM & Installation Support Directorate, retired in August.

The colonel entered active duty in 1982 as an enlisted person and was commissioned through Officer Training School in 1987.

Colonel Prazak, a Registered Professional Engineer, served assignments at a number of U. S. bases, major commands and with NATO Joint Force Command Headquarters in The Netherlands.

In addition, he served overseas tours in Honduras, Qatar, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Colonel Prazak's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star and Air Force Commendation Medal. □

## 'Hails and Farewells' from the San Francisco REO:

Maj. Judith Walker, who has just recently completed her LLM (master of law) degree in environmental law at George Washington University, is the new deputy regional counsel. She succeeds Maj. George Konoval who was reassigned to Shaw Air Force Base, S. C. He was at the San Francisco office for three years.

Edwin P. Worth, technical associate and regional environmental officer for Region X, is leaving the Western REO at the end of August to go work for the Department of Energy in New Mexico.

He came to the San Francisco office in December 2004 following an assignment at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. □



# San Antonio boys' team plays in national championship

A boy's basketball team for which AFCEE's Roger Lozano is assistant coach and his son a member competed in a national tournament in Florida in July.

The San Antonio Mustangs came in second at the 2007 14 and Under Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Division II Boys Basketball National Championship held in Cocoa Beach, July 15-21.

The Mustangs came within two and a half minutes of claiming the national championship, said Mr. Lozano, whose son Adrian plays on the pre-high school team. "This year's finish was the best they've ever done," he said.

More than 100 teams from across the nation took part in the games, which were played over a seven-day period in high school gyms throughout the Cocoa Beach area.

San Antonio AAU region officials said that the Mustangs were the first team from South Texas area ever to finish in the top four of any national championship tournament.

The nationally-ranked San Antonio Mustangs received an automatic bid to the 2008 AAU Boys Basketball National Championship.

The team's head coach is Cris Vieyra. Mr. Lozano and Mr. Vieyra started the team six years ago and have coached the team from the beginning.

The team's core has been playing together since they were nine years old.

"We have players from throughout the San Antonio area and every socioeconomic group," said Mr. Lozano, adding that the 14-year-olds routinely play against older local teams to help them prepare for the national competition.

The boys have done their own fundraising, allowing them and their parents to travel out of state for tourneys during the last six years, said Mr. Lozano.

Before they joined the team, "a lot of players had never been outside of San Antonio," said Mr. Lozano, deputy division chief with the Capital Investment Execution Division.



The San Antonio Mustangs basketball team took second place at the 2007 14 and Under Amateur Athletic Union Division II Boys Basketball National Championship held in Cocoa Beach, Fla., July 15-21. The team's assistant coach is Roger Lozano, far right, MAJCOM & Installation Support Directorate technical assistant. His son, Adrian, to his right, is a player on the team. Other members are, from left, head coach Cris Vieyra, Devin Vieyra, Scott Mammel, Lawrence Gonzalez, Everett Smith, Zantwan Franklin, Doug Slattery, Richard Garza, Josh Garza, Trinidad Martinez, Craig Cardona and Troy Dotson-Lara. (Courtesy photo)

"In the six years they've been playing together they've won over 250 games and only three teams in the Central and South Texas areas, and in their age group, have beaten them," he added.

The 6-foot-2 Adrian Lozano helped his team by averaging 15 points and 14 rebounds over the nine-game national tournament.

"In a pinch, my son can play every position on the team, but his primary position is small forward," said Mr. Lozano. "Adrian has been with the team since he was nine years old, but he began playing competitive basketball with a church league at the age of four."

The young man will be a freshman at Sandra Day O'Connor High School in the fall. He said he hopes to play basketball for the school and continue playing in college. □

# AFCEE's new executive director: An 'old colonel' who enjoys mentoring



Col. Keith F. Yaktus is AFCEE's new executive director and military commander.

Col. Keith F. Yaktus, AFCEE's new executive director and military commander, calls himself "a major cheesehead."

Born in Portage, Wis., (population at last census 9,728) he graduated from the University

of Wisconsin in Madison in 1981 with a degree in industrial engineering. That's also where he met his future wife Tamara.

Unfortunately for the young graduate, he finished school during a recession and companies were not hiring.

"So I ate some humble pie and moved home with my parents while my fiancé finished her degree at Wisconsin," Colonel Yaktus related.

One day, however, he saw an Air Force recruiting ad and decided to call a recruiter, a move that was to change the course of his life.

"(The recruiter) brought me in to take the officer qualification test and fill out paperwork," Colonel Yaktus said. "Within a month I was accepted."

Although his decision to join the Air Force had been driven by economic reasons, the officer soon found himself enjoying the challenge that the military offered.

After completing Officer Training School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, he served his first assignment at Langley Air Force Base, Va., with the 1st Civil Engineer Squadron. Almost three years later, in 1985, he went back to Lackland as an OTS instructor and executive officer.

"That assignment really 'blued' me," he said. "I had a blast, and the reward of mentoring and forming civilians and prior-enlisted trainees into Air Force officers was awesome. Now that I'm an old colonel, mentoring more junior officers, enlisted and civilians is what I enjoy the most."

Colonel Yaktus, who has held a number of commander positions, adds that early in his career he realized that it's the people who run the organization and make the mission happen – not necessarily the leadership.

"They know more about their job than I do," he said.

So instead of telling people what to do he provides "support, resources and priorities and watch those talented people do great things," the colonel said.

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“...I’m proud, honored and excited to be here ...”

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As an AFCEE customer in previous assignments and having served overseas, Colonel Yaktus says he understands “the importance of what our project managers and our contractors are doing to rebuild Iraq and improve conditions for our military across the AOR (area of responsibility). I hope my perspective will provide AFCEE a fresh look at how we support the warfighters at home and overseas.”

The colonel was assigned to his new job in July, replacing Col. Richard Bartholomew who retired from the Air Force.

The military commander says he sees his new role at the Center as keeping the organization “focused on change and to support the people in AFCEE as we grow in population and take on the MILCON (military construction) program for the Air Force.”

The times ahead will be challenging for the Center, he said, “and busy days for me personally” as AFCEE goes through transformation and as Paul Parker, AFCEE director, moves on to take a position in Washington as deputy to Maj. Gen. Del Eulberg, the Air Force Civil Engineer.

“The workload here is huge as AFCEE will approach nearly \$3 billion in execution this fiscal year,” the executive director continued. “But I’m proud, honored and excited to be here, and I look forward to my time at AFCEE.”

Colonel Yaktus and his wife have a daughter, a special education elementary school teacher in Phoenix who is expecting their first grandchild, and a son who is a junior at Arizona State University, working on a degree in construction engineering. □

## Col. Keith F. Yaktus' career at a glance

<b>Nov. 1982 – Oct. 1985</b>	contract programmer and branch chief, 1st Civil Engineer Squadron, Langley Air Force Base, Va.
<b>Oct. 1985 - June 1988</b>	instructor and executive officer, Officer Training School, Lackland AFB, Texas
<b>June 1988 - July 1990</b>	base civil engineer, Decimomannu Air Base, Italy
<b>Aug. 1990 - July 1993</b>	command facility requirements programmer and executive officer, Headquarters United States Air Force Europe, Directorate of Civil Engineering, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
<b>July 1993 - July 1995</b>	operations flight commander, 64th Civil Engineer Squadron, Reese AFB, Texas
<b>July 1995 - July 1997</b>	commander, Detachment 1, 823rd RED HORSE Squadron, Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.
<b>July 1997 - June 1999</b>	environmental program manager, Office of the Air Force Civil Engineer, Washington
<b>July 1999 - June 2001</b>	commander, 14th Civil Engineer Squadron, Columbus Air Force Base, Miss.
<b>June 2001 - July 2003</b>	deputy commander, 56th Mission Support Group, Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.
<b>July 2003 - June 2004</b>	chief, Programs Division, Directorate of the Civil Engineer, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.
<b>June 2004 – July 2005</b>	chief, Environmental Programs Division and chief, Civil Engineer Operations Division, Installations and Mission Support Directorate, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Ill.
<b>July 2005 – July 2007</b>	commander, 62nd Mission Support Group, McChord Air Force Base, Wash.
<b>July 2007 to present</b>	executive director, AFCEE



Dan Turek, Installations Worldwide Atlantic Division chief, receives an Air Force Civilian Achievement Medal from Paul Parker, AFCEE director, Aug. 7 at Brooks City-Base. Mr. Turek received this award for his work as an AFCEE project manager while deployed to Iraq. Mr. Turek was one of first two AFCEE members in Iraq to start the \$3.2 billion reconstruction effort. (Photo by Marti D. Ribeiro)



Lt. Gen. Kevin J. Sullivan, left, deputy chief of staff for logistics, installations and mission support, is briefed by AFCEE director Paul Parker during a recent visit to the Center. Waiting their turn to brief the general are John LaHue, center, AFCEE budget officer, and Dave Holquin, data specialist. Mr. LaHue gave the general an overview of the budget office and on the purchase request process improvement, the result of an AFCEE-wide functional LEAN event. "We are now able to process a PR within one and a half days, which under the old process averaged 10 days," the budget officer told the visitor. "And we continue to engineer quality into the process."



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Members of the 36th Civil Engineer Squadron install striping on the new runway at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. AFCEE contractor refurbished the base's North Runway. Story begins on page 7. (Courtesy photo)